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SOURCE Politika.

YUGOSLAV PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL EVADE SERVICE IN INTERIOR

The Yugoslav government has had considerable difficulty in inducing professionally trained personnel to leave the relative comfort of the large cities and relocate in smaller communities in the interior. This resistance to changing locations has spread to university students, who use every possible means to delay obtaining a diploma, which would make them subject to government regulations on distribution of professionally trained personnel. Politika has recently conducted a vigorous and intensive campaign against those who deliberately evade service in the interior. The following report is concerned with the findings of Politika as published in a few of the many articles in that newspaper on the subject, and points out a weak link in the socialist plan for modernizing and industrializing backward Yugoslavia.

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.

The rapid development of the economy and social life of Yugoslavia is demonstrating an ever-increasing need for specialist personnel. To relieve the effects of the scarcity of such personnel, more attention must be given to their proper distribution and utilization. However, proper distribution becomes difficult when there are students evading service in the interior, by saying that they want to continue their studies and perfect themselves in their specialty, or that they want to prepare doctoral dissertations, do research, or remain in Belgrade because they are natives of the city. (1)

Students are asked to graduate as soon as possible. Health statistics and the high mortality rate, especially that of infants, undeveloped natural resources, and industry, show the need for engineers, doctors, teachers, and geologists.

The question of qualifying for diplomas more rapidly or taking examinations as soon as possible relates to the students' honor, conscience, and political and moral sensibility, for it is their sacred duty to answer the call of the builders and the workers as soon as possible.

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In the past 2 years there has been a steady increase in the number of students who have not taken their final examinations. At present there are 12,000 prospective engineers, doctors, lawyers, and veterinarians who have only a few examinations to pass before their final graduation. Most of these could finish their examinations this year if they wanted to.

There is an oversupply of such students, including students in the technical schools, who put off taking their examinations. They earn money for their keep by drawing comic strips, by competing in crossword-puzzle contests, writing technical articles, or working as assistants to their "older colleagues," such as engineers who remain in Belgrade for what they call "objective" reasons and are paid great sums for decorating, renovating, and setting up bars, cafes, confectioners' shops, and displays of luxury goods.

For example, an Agricultural Faculty student of several years standing takes an examination once in a while so he can still be considered a student. A year ago, he took the examination that precedes the final one, but when he will take his final examination is problematical. In the meantime, he gives lessons on the harmonica during the winter, and in the summer he plays in the orchestra of some large hotel on the Adriatic where he gets exceptionally good lodgings and excellent food and an additional 5,000-6,000 dinars.

Others skillfully deplete the resources of their parents, obtaining additional money from them while continuing their studies, money which their parents acquired with difficulty and set aside through self-denial. There are also parents (usually financially well off) who have no objection to their children prolonging their studies until vacancies in far off backward areas are filled.

The Veterinary Faculty in Belgrade claims to have the smallest number of procrastinating students, for their students finish their final examinations more rapidly than in other faculties. But of 200-300 students, two thirds have been ready to take their final examinations for over a year. If all of them were to finish their examinations by the end of the year, every srez in Yugoslavia would have an additional veterinarian. (2)

A survey of the various Faculties of Belgrade University, conducted by VI. Ilic to determine why some "apsolventi" (students who have completed their courses but have not taken their final examinations) have not taken their final examinations and why some who have earned diplomas have not claimed them revealed the following.

The Main Administration for Forestry of Serbia stated that it is short about 200 foresters. For example, there are only 17 foresters in Kosovo-Metohija, which has about 400,000 hectares of forests. Three of these are in the administrations for forestry and 14 in the field. However, the City Parks Administration of the Belgrade People's Council has 14 foresters working for it, although it has about 400 times less forest area than Kosovo-Metohija.

Yugoslavia is still waiting for some of the 250 foresters who have earned diplomas from Belgrade University since the liberation, and the more than 120 "apsolventi" in the Forestry Faculty in Belgrade, some of whom have completed about 6 years of faculty work but have not taken their final examinations for their diplomas.

All professional personnel who receive their diplomas are subject to the planned distribution of highly trained persons. Thus, foresters are assigned to jobs by the Council for Agriculture and Forestry. Many professionally trained personnel therefore do not claim their diplomas because they fear they may be assigned to the interior.

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About every 17th university student at Belgrade University fails to claim his diploma. During the past 6 years, about 4,500 students completed their work in the philosophy, mathematics, law, economics, veterinary, agriculture, and forestry faculties of Belgrade University, but about 260 diplomas are still unclaimed.

These men have found employment outside their profession and have not claimed their diplomas to prevent going to the interior, while establishments and enterprises have given them jobs, being anxious to obtain professional personnel.

Many diplomas are unclaimed from the agriculture faculty, although farm work cooperatives are looking for more agricultural technicians.

At present, over 4,000 "apsolventi" at Belgrade University make up a reserve of professional personnel. They are distributed among the faculties as follows: economics, 1,375; law, 980; philosophy, 614; agriculture, 432; veterinary science, 309; mathematics, 207; forestry, 122; and others in the technical and advanced medical schools.

One fifth of them have been "apsolventi" for 3 to 6 years, while the remainder have had that standing for 1 to 3 years. However, one half of the latter group are part-time students who are employed in their professions and therefore completing their studies slowly. Even among these are some who deliberately do not complete their studies to keep from being assigned to the interior. (3)

Miners do not want to go to the mines or builders to construction projects. Agriculturists do not want to go to farm work cooperatives or state farms, or engineers and technicians to factories. Lawyers avoid the courts and the people's councils, professors the schools, etc. They all want to do research in their fields.

Of 35 young doctors in the final stages of their training in the Belgrade City Hospital and who are awaiting proper placement, 15 doctors and 13 pharmacists do not work in the interior. Some of these have even begun to engage in private practice, even though it is against the law. Some are even getting married to evade duty in the interior.

It is nearly a year since a group of engineers were supposed to be transferred to key projects in other republics than Serbia, but many have not yet responded to their assignments.

Of 20 public servants to be transferred to the Kosmet, mostly from Belgrade, ten accepted, although they were all originally from the Kosmet and most of their families still live there. One man did not accept because his wife did not want to leave Belgrade.

Although 12 doctors were assigned to key projects in the Sandzak and the Kosmet, only three have left for their new assignments. Either pleading illness or a desire to specialize, or no reason at all, they refused the transfers, although they were assigned a year ago.

One young doctor, recently assigned to a construction project in Sevojno, wrote to friends to rescue him and get him back to Belgrade or he would kill himself.

The Council for Industry (Savet za industriju) of Serbia transferred a group of engineers to key projects, but not a single one showed up for duty. Although the council does not even know where they are, it has taken no measures to enforce the transfers.

Numerous and unwarranted interventions in transfers by top managers are resulting in many specialist personnel failing to be assigned where they are most

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needed. More than 20 doctors remain in Belgrade because of such interventions. There are some managers who have become well known for intervening in cases where there is no reasonable excuse for doing so.

Such relationships between public servants and managers are causing a considerable number of specialists to continue to do administrative work instead of working in the fields for which they are trained.

For instance, the "Galenika" Pharmaceutical Enterprise (Preduzece "Galenika") in Zemun employs two lawyers and two women teachers. One of the latter is employed as an administrative functionary and the other as a librarian. The Enterprise for Film Bookings (Preduzece za prikazivanje filmova) of the tenth district has four women teachers, a public servant who is a university graduate, and one with a law degree, all of whom are doing administrative work. The Scientific Books Enterprise (Preduzece naucnih knjiga) employs three lawyers, the "Svetlost" Electric Equipment Enterprise (Preduzece "Svetlost") employs two teachers in administration, and the like. (1)

Punitive action is being taken against those who refuse to accept transfers to the interior. For instance, the Disciplinary Court of Belgrade sentenced five employees, part of whom were sentenced on 20 May (4) and part on 27 May. (5)

Vlada Stefanovic, a pharmacist employed by the Belgrade City Enterprise for Sale of Medicines (Gradska preduzece za promet lekova), was sentenced to dismissal from government service for refusing to accept an assignment transferring him to Trgoviste as manager of the drugstore there. The court stipulated that he could not re-enter the pharmacy service for 2 years.

Dobrovoje Misavljevic, also employed by the City Enterprise as a junior commercial worker [sales or business personnel] was dismissed from government service and prohibited from re-entering it for one year. He had refused to accept a transfer to the People's Council of Kosovo-Metohija Oblast although he has no family or any other ties in Belgrade. (4)

Branko Dankovic, an employee of the "Sava" Construction Enterprise (Gradjevinsko preduzece "Sava"), who was transferred to the Kucevo Srez People's Council, accepted the transfer but did not report for his new assignment. He claimed he was not obligated to comply, even though he had accepted, and that he supported a sick sister whose ailments would be aggravated by a change in climate. He was sentenced to dismissal from government service, with the stipulation that he could not return for 18 months.

Zivojin Marjanovic, also employed by the "Sava" Construction Enterprise, refused to comply with a transfer to Lebane, alleging that the transfer was illegal and that his wife was sick. He also was sentenced to dismissal from government service and prohibited from returning for 18 months. (5)

Dragoljub Nikolic, who recently became an actor after working for a long time as a legal adviser following his graduation from law school (4), was sentenced to dismissal from government service (5) for refusing to accept a transfer to Novi Sad. (4) He was prohibited from returning to the service for one year. (5)

SOURCES

1. Belgrade, Politika, 3 Apr 52
2. Ibid., 29 Mar 52
3. Ibid., 11 Apr 52
4. Ibid., 21 May 52
5. Ibid., 28 May 52

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